



Transportation

December 2015 Newsletter

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Division 6

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NCDOT Wants to Help You Save Time, Money Over Holidays



NCDOT has tips to help you navigate the highways safely during the holiday travel season.

As families travel over the river and through the woods for celebrations, the N.C. Department of Transportation will suspend most road construction activities on major routes across the state to help make their trips a little smoother. By avoiding traffic delays, motorists can reach their destinations safely and efficiently, while cutting down on fuel consumption and costs. The list of closures will be available closer to the holidays on [our website](#). For real-time travel information at any time, visit the [Travel section](#) of the NCDOT website or follow NCDOT on [Twitter](#).

Here are some additional tips for navigating the highways safely during the holiday travel season:

- Leave early to get a head start on your drive. Travel at non-peak hours when possible.
- Stay alert. Even if work is suspended, you may encounter narrowed lanes and traffic shifts in work zones.
- Be patient and obey the posted speed limit.
- Use alternate routes, when possible, to avoid traffic congestion.

Stay Connected



N.C. Transportation
Now

On the latest N.C. Transportation now, the department shares safety tips for drone use, DMV offices across the state get upgrades for next generation driver licenses, and NCDOT wants to hear what your favorite trails are around the state.

[Watch this week's N.C. Transportation Now](#)

**More Lanes Open
Along Fayetteville**

- Stay informed. Real-time travel information is available online and over the phone by dialing 511.
- Don't drive drowsy. Travel at times when you are normally awake, and take frequent breaks.
- Avoid distracted driving. When drivers stop focusing on the road ahead, they react more slowly to traffic conditions and are more likely to be involved in an accident.

Detours Begin Near Campbell University Pedestrian Tunnel Project

NCDOT started road closures and detours on U.S. 421/N.C. 27 before Thanksgiving in Buies Creek as work continues on a new pedestrian tunnel at Campbell University. Detours were originally scheduled for Nov. 16. The project postponement is due to a delay in receiving materials critical to the work.

Motorists should follow a signed detour using Johnson Farm Road to Sherriff Johnson Road to Old Stage Road to N.C. 27 back to U.S. 421. The detour is anticipated to last about one month before U.S. 421/N.C. 27 is reopened to one lane of travel in each direction. Local traffic will still have access to campus via Leslie Campbell Road and Harmon Road.

Located under U.S. 421/N.C. 27, the tunnel will make it safer and easier for pedestrians to navigate the university and the area around campus, including the football stadium. The project includes paving, drainage, retaining walls and an underground culvert.

Other North Carolina universities have similar tunnels to access areas of the campus, but this will be the first for Campbell University. The tunnel is anticipated to be open to the public in the summer of 2016. Crews will continue work to the surrounding area, including planting vegetation, through December 2016. The contractor for the \$2.6 million project is Branch Highways of Roanoke, V.A., which was awarded to the lowest bidder as required by state law.

Part of Fayetteville Outer Loop Accelerated With New State Budget

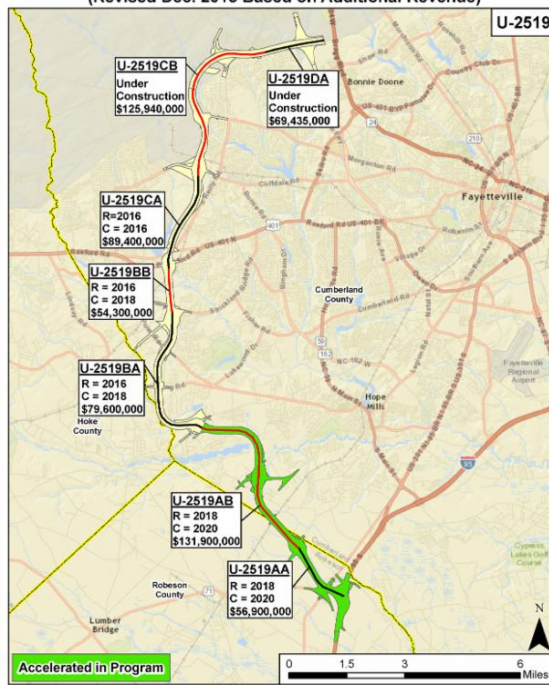
Cape Fear River and Cross Creek Bridge Projects

NCDOT opened two lanes of traffic in each direction along Interstate 95 Business/U.S. 301 in November. With these openings, the work on two bridges over the Cape Fear River and Cross Creek near the Cape Fear Botanical Gardens is nearly complete.

Crews have finished work to install the new median with only pavement striping, signage and miscellaneous clean up left for the project.

The nearly \$16-million project along the I-95 Business Loop and U.S. 301 began in 2012. Both bridges were 61 years old and considered structurally deficient and functionally obsolete. This means they were built to design standards no longer in use, such as narrow lanes, inadequate under-clearances and insufficient load-carrying capacity. A functionally obsolete and structurally deficient bridge is like an old house. It was constructed years ago and built based on all of the particular standards of the time. Now, it needs updating. This doesn't mean it's unsafe; it means work needs to be done to bring it up to

Governor Pat McCrory recently announced that a section of the Fayetteville Outer Loop is seeing its construction date moved up thanks to the signed 2015 state budget. Construction of other local projects is also accelerating or



being newly funded, because of the budget. Members of the North Carolina Board of Transportation today received the amended project schedules for review at their monthly meeting and are expected to approve them in January 2016.

"The reforms I signed into law will get these roads built sooner," Governor McCrory said. "The primary purpose of the reforms was to ensure transportation funds were being spent on transportation projects and not diverted to other state programs."

The section extending the loop from Camden Road to Interstate 95 South of Fayetteville will see the construction accelerated from 2021 to 2020. Additionally, other newly funded projects will increase local mobility and connectivity in the Fayetteville/Hope Mills area and include:

- Widening Cliffdale Road from a two-lane to a multi-lane road from McPherson Church Road to Morganton Road;
- Widening Rockfish Road from Golfview Road to N.C. 59 and Golfview Road from Rockfish to N.C. 59; and
- Widening Shaw Road/Shaw Mill Road/Rosehill Road/Stacey Weaver Drive from U.S. 401/Ramsey Street to N.C. 210/Murchison Road and constructing part on a new location.

"The acceleration of these two sections of the Fayetteville Outer Loop will work to improve vehicle capacity and relieve congestion along the I-295 corridor," said Division Six Board of Transportation member Terry Hutchens. "This will help not only our local drivers, but also connect Fort Bragg to the strategic I-95 corridor and enhance mobility options for our military."

The state budget included an additional \$1.6 billion over the next 10 years for transportation funding. They did so through the elimination of the transfer from the Highway Fund to the General Fund and through other fee and rate changes. The additional money allows N.C. Transportation to add or accelerate a total of 248 construction projects across the state.

Ninety-two new segments of highway projects can now be funded in the recently approved 2016-2025 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), the department's 10-year construction plan. The construction schedules of another 90 highway projects already approved in the STIP also are being accelerated. An additional 66 non-highway projects are also being added to or accelerated in the program.

The department followed the Strategic Transportation Investments (STI) law to identify new projects (either segments or entire projects) at the statewide, regional and division levels. The projects were identified from those previously scored based on the same weights and criteria (data) used to develop the 2016-2025 STIP.

All local and statewide projects also being accelerated or added can be found [here](#).

NCDOT Offers Tips for Drone Safety



This holiday season, one of the most popular gifts could literally fly off the shelves.

Whether they're called quadcopters, radio controlled planes, or any of the high-tech brand names, drones are expected to be big sellers this year, with some estimating as many as 700,000 will make their way into Americans' homes by the end of December.

All of these devices fall under the category of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS). UAS technology is an exciting and evolving field, which can lead to confusion for both UAS owners and the general public. The N.C. Department of Transportation is offering tips to help UAS owners enjoy their new

technology while protecting citizens' safety and privacy.

"We're proud of North Carolina's legacy of being first in manned flight," said NCDOT Secretary Nick Tennyson. "The academic and industry researchers in our state will make us a leader in unmanned flight as well."

NCDOT's Division of Aviation has established guidelines for UAS operation in North Carolina. Both the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the NCDOT Division of Aviation classify UAS flight operations by three categories:

- Recreational - Any UAS flight that is conducted solely for the purpose of recreation.
- Government - Any UAS flight conducted by a government entity to support their work.
- Commercial - Any UAS flight that serves a business purpose or provides a business benefit, even if that benefit is indirect.

Government and commercial UAS operators must adhere to state and federal requirements established by the North Carolina General Assembly and the FAA. Each classification is subject to specific regulations and guidelines.

Many of the UAS owners who receive a drone during this holiday season will use them for purely recreational purposes. While recreational UAS flights are not heavily regulated, the FAA and model aircraft enthusiast groups have established a number of guidelines which should be followed to ensure a fun and safe experience:

- Always fly below an altitude of 400 feet and fly within your direct line of sight.
- Do not fly within 5 miles of an airport, near stadiums or other public events, or for compensation.
- Do not fly UAS that weigh more than 55 pounds.
- Do not fly at night, even if your UAS is equipped with lights.

"UAS technology is fun and exciting, but it needs to be used responsibly," said Division of Aviation Director Bobby Walston. "These guidelines will help ensure the safety of people in the air and on the ground."

UAS operators, whether recreational, government or commercial, should keep in mind that North Carolina has laws governing drone use. UAS users are subject to all North Carolina laws, even if UAS technology is not specifically mentioned. Current and potential drone owners can find more information about state and federal UAS regulations on the Division of Aviation's website.

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